(d) what steps are being taken to get them released; and

(e) when they will be actually released?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) 54 Indian Prisoners of War (PoW's) are believed to be in Pakistani jails. The Government has consistently taken up the issue of their release and repatriation with the Government of Pakistan at all levels. During the Agra Summit on 15.7.2001 also, Prime Minister urged the Pakistani President to take urgent and purposeful action towards the release of these PoW's.

Pakistan has never acknowledged the presence of any PoW in its custody. Following the Agra Summit in July last year, Government of Pakistan reportedly conducted another search for Indian PoW's but again reiterated that there was no Indian PoW in Pakistani jails. Government would continue to take up this issue with the Government of Pakistan.

Setting up of Defence University

647. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Defence University in the country;

(b) if so, the details and purpose thereof;

(c) whether the location of the University has been finalised if so, the details thereof;

(d) the amount expected to be incurred thereon; and

(e) when it is expected to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) The issue relating to setting up of a Defence University in the country is under examination by Committee constituted for this purpose by the Government. Among the various terms of reference, the Committee is also to identify the location for setting up of Defence University and the amount of expenditure to be incurred in setting up of the University. No time-frame for its setting up has been fixed as yet.